

**Washington, D.C.** - A national leader on Internet safety, Congresswoman Melissa Bean helped launch the National Partnership in Safe Computing at a Capitol Hill event Thursday.

The public-private partnership will bring online safety advocates, educators and industry together with Members of Congress to engage and educate parents and families on the topic of online safety and security. Bean is joined by Congressman Frank Wolf (R-VA) as bipartisan co-chairs of the program.

Thursday's kickoff event helped educate Representatives and their staff members on how to hold educational forums on online safety similar to those Bean has held across the 8th District.

"We've taught our children to be wary of stranger danger on the playground, but their wide use of the Internet and networking sites expands the dangers of a virtual playground into our homes," Bean said.

"The Partnership demonstrates not only the leadership of the private sector but also those Members of Congress who have rolled up their sleeves to help Internet users and parents across America take control of their online experiences," said Tim Lordan, executive director of the National Partnership for Safe Computing.

A leading advocate for Internet safety, Bean introduced the first comprehensive online safety bill last Congress. As part of her ongoing efforts to raise community awareness, Bean has provided Internet safety advice to parents and kids at public forums across the 8th District.

Bean's SAFER NET, or the Safeguard America's Families by Enhancing and Reorganizing New and Efficient Technologies Act, passed the House last year. It authorizes \$5 million for a national public awareness campaign through the Federal Trade Commission and calls on the FTC to become a national clearinghouse for existing resources on Internet safety, making it easier for schools and parents to find reliable information.

This bill is part of an Internet safety initiative moved by the U.S. House last year, which included passage of two other bills she was proud to cosponsor.

Bean helped introduce H.R. 3845, the PROTECT Act (Providing Resources Officers and Technology to Eradicate Cyber Threats to our Children Act). The bill, authored by Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL) will build a strong nationwide network of highly trained law enforcement experts to track down known sex offenders. It provides resources for following offenders' Internet footprints online.

Bean is also a co-sponsor of H.R. 719, the KIDS Act (Keeping the Internet Devoid of Sexual Predators Act). The bill, authored by Rep. Earl Pomeroy (D-ND), requires sex offenders to register their e-mail and instant message addresses with the National Sex Offender Registry, as they now register their physical addresses.

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